



# Newport: Making Chemical Weapons History

Community pride and small town spirit characterize the Newport, Ind., area. This beautiful mid-West region also is playing a vital role in national and global affairs. Near Newport, the U.S. Army is making chemical weapons history at its Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility. This facility will destroy a stockpile of chemical agent that has been stored at the Newport Chemical Depot for nearly 40 years.

## Where is the chemical agent located?

The chemical agent, a highly toxic chemical stored in sturdy steel containers, is housed safely at the Newport Chemical Depot. Contrary to popular belief, the chemical agent is not a gas, but an oily liquid. The depot, which is a military installation, opened in 1941 as the Wabash River Ordnance Works. Various warfare materials, including chemical agent, were manufactured at this site. In the late 1960's, the U.S. stopped production and shipment of chemical agent and weapons. Since then, this stockpile of chemical agent, which the United States never used, has remained in safe storage at the depot.

## What is the Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility?

The Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility will safely and efficiently neutralize the chemical agent stockpiled at the depot.

## How will the chemical agent be destroyed?

Following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the Army is expediting safe neutralization of the Newport stockpile using sodium hydroxide and standard industrial equipment. The resulting byproduct, called hydrolysate, is similar in characteristics to commercial household drain cleaners. It will be tested to ensure that the chemical agent has been destroyed and then will be treated and disposed.



## Who will destroy the chemical agent?

The Army's Chemical Materials Agency (Provisional) is responsible for safely disposing of the stockpile. In 1999, the Army awarded Parsons, an architectural engineering firm from Pasadena, Calif., the contract to build, test, operate and close the demilitarization facility. Many other organizations work in partnership with the Army to complete this mission safely. Among these are the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, the state of Indiana, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region V, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Some of your family members, friends or neighbors may work on this important project.

## How long will it take to destroy the chemical agent?

Construction of the original Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility began in April 2000. Since adopting processes to allow for accelerated neutralization, construction on the modified facility should be completed in 2003. A period of testing, called systemization, will follow construction until operations begin. Once operations begin, destruction of the nerve agent will last about nine months. After all operations are completed and the empty storage containers are cleaned and sent off-site for recycling, the facility will be closed.

For more information,  
contact the  
Public Outreach and  
Information Office of the  
Chemical Materials  
Agency (Provisional)  
1(800) 488-0648 or  
[www.cma.army.mil](http://www.cma.army.mil)

or visit the  
Newport Chemical  
Stockpile  
Outreach Office  
P.O. Box 279  
140 South Main Street  
Newport, Indiana 47966  
Phone: (765) 492-4445  
Fax: (765) 492-4475



## Newport: Making Chemical Weapons History (continued)

### **How will the Army protect the environment?**

The Army is working closely with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and other regulatory agencies to ensure operations at the disposal facility are protective of local citizens and the surrounding environment.

### **What will happen to the facility and the depot once the agent is gone?**

Chemical agent disposal is the depot's final mission. Once disposal is completed, the facility will be dismantled, and the depot will undergo a closure process.

### **What is the Indiana Citizens' Advisory Commission?**

This commission, also referred to as the CAC, is made up of nine members appointed by the governor of Indiana. Members are from the Newport region and include state and county officials, as well as technical experts. The purpose of this organization is to provide a link between your community and the Army. The members do not make program decisions, but they are encouraged to provide guidance and recommendations. The commission provides a community perspective to the Army so that it may manage the chemical agent disposal program in a way that includes public input. The CAC holds regular meetings throughout

the year. The community is encouraged to attend these meetings, which are open to the public and announced in local newspapers. Meetings also include time for public input and questions.

### **How can I learn more?**

The Army opened the Newport Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office in 1997 as a convenient "one-stop" source of information about the chemical disposal program. The office staff works closely with experts from the depot, the disposal facility and your local emergency preparedness offices to ensure a comprehensive public involvement and outreach program. The office has a large repository of fact sheets, brochures, exhibits and technical studies for you to peruse, but this is just the beginning of what it offers. The outreach staff frequently can be seen in the Newport area giving presentations, hosting public meetings, distributing informational materials and representing the Army at community events.

### **How can I contact the CAC?**

For information on the current issues the commission is considering, or to find out the upcoming meeting schedule, please call the Newport Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office at (765) 492-4445.